GREEN HEART VISION

NEWTON HARRISON HELEN MAYER HARRISON

AND

THE HARRISON STUDIO

WITH

THE GREEN HEART HARRISON STUDIO

THE GREEN HEART VISION BY THE HARRISON STUDIO

On the Urgency of the Moment

Looking at the map of Holland.
Seeing it as the expression of a moment
in 1200 years of contested history
about who will command the land
and why and how.
Seeing it as a metaphor
for yet another contest
as to who will shape the future
of this physical terrain
understood to be the Randstad
and the Green Heart.

Where in a ten year moment
less than one percent of the time
of its whole history as a civilization
the people on this ground
must construct a response
in physical terms
to intense population pressure
coupled to an expansion committed
economic engine in such a way
that these two self-reproducing forces
mutually energizing and interrelated
will consume
much of these lands available
in the Green Heart
which do not have specific ecological
or historical or other civic designation
and unless or until
a new direction is set in place
an alternative consensus agred upon
by governmental and economic
and civic institutions
on limiting growth.

For
in the absence of
such an alternate consensus
clearly expressed on the ground
the outcome for the Green Heart
the Randstad
and the lowlands of Holland
appears to be
unfortunate in the extreme
mostly unnecessary
but mostly inevitable.

Where the Green Heart Vision is established on the map and the Vision is re-established as an aerial photo, stated in tile, as a floor piece where all can see their place in the landscape

Bad Government

On unfortunate reversals

It happens.
An unfortunate reversal
can occur
where a system that has worked well
over time and over space
to the advantage of many
and the disadvantage of few
can slowly over time
begin to work against its own interests
to the disadvantage of many
and the advantage of few.

Looking at the map in total silence
a disturbing vision
of a near future development
for the Green Heart of Holland
and the Randstad appeared
within which
habitat opportunities
would be so fragmented
that biodiversity
would be unable to express itself
in any fullness
and cultural diversity
would be lost in massive urban sprawl.

In this vision
through the historic process of development
all cities in the Randstad
their population growth uncontrolled
would begin to touch each other
until
their historic cultural identities merged
and simultaneously a new
very diminished Green Heart
would emerge
whose
rich agricultural history was consumed
whose topology was fragmented
into three and then four parts
while Woerden Alphen Gouda
and Bodegraven co-joined.

In this vision
the strip along the Merwede River
that contains Gorichem and Dordrecht
would expand northward
and Utrecht
would grow westward to Woerden
while Rotterdam and Leiden would grow
eastward toward Gouda and Alphen
respectively.
And this was neither good
nor necessary
nor inevitable.

And
in the end game of all this development
the planning system became
progressively self-cancelling
as this process
guided by the belief
that market place and development forces
are a law unto themselves
have a life of their own
and impact planning as they will
and that these forces
are mostly good
always necessary
and completely inevitable.

Now this system of development
becomes self-cancelling
to the extent that it does not contain
a consensus on sustainability
acting as if limits to growth
are unattainable
and in fact unwise
and
that future will simply be
one or more variations of the past.

Thus it appears
that the planning system in Holland
is presently enacting
historic beliefs and processes
that are so simple and so long standing
that they are practically invisible
and certainly unquestioned
and
the results are always the same
taking the form of patches
or blocks or small land masses
or water masses or parks
with occasional ecological reserves
each patch a fragment
each fragment reflecting a desire
each fragment reflecting the belief
that all fragments will finally meet
in a much to be desired future
that will take care of itself.

Finally
these plans evolve and are enacted
in ignorance of the paradigms
and the paradox
that biodiversity requires connectivity
and continuity
to exist and flourish
while
cultural diversity needs framing
and separation
to exist and flourish.

Finally
in this increasingly unbalanced image
as the unbuilt living environment
is fragmented and
development driven urban sprawl
is growing to meet
development driven urban sprawl
the loss of cultural diversity
mirrors the loss of biodiversity
and as cultural monoculture
meets biological monoculture
the outcome
is mostly unfortunate
yet certainly not inevitable.

On Bad Government where the division of the Green Heart into three parts is drawn

Good Government

Where Limitation is Survival

It happens
although rarely
that complicated but powerful
environmental planning systems
like those in the Randstad
and those in the Green Heart
facing an imminent conflict
between growth and habitability
can construct a new consensus
on the nature value and meaning
of their own goals.

When this happens
a fortunate reversal can occur
whereby a planning system
envisions a future terrain
the design of which can go far beyond
production on the ground
of variations of and improvisations on
its own successful past work.

Looking at the map in silence
refusing to imagine the Randstad
and the Green Heart
together in an ensemble
as a site for growth and development
as space for 600,000 houses
as space for about 1,500,00 people
with all that infrastructure
but instead imagining
all of the urban places fading back
then
all of the open lands
mostly polder
melding into one land.

And from this envisioning
a new image emerges
where the Green Heart
appears
to undulate through
the whole urban landscape
in long arrays
of polder and farm and wetland
cojoined
which act simultaneously
as separation and boundary
and
as outreach arms from the Green Heart
which serve as green space
as breathing space
as park space and public lands
between Dordrecht and Rotterdam
Rotterdam and Den Haag
Den Haag and Leiden
between Leiden and Haarlem
Haarlem and Amsterdam
Amsterdam and Hilversum
Hilversum and Utrecht
in fact
between all the large cities
in and about the Randstad.

In this future
the cities secure their cultural identities
by gaining parkland borders
improving the quality of the space
they will need to construct housing
connecting themselves to the Green Heart
and to each other
through parklands at large scale
and gaining the benefits of clean air
and grander vistas
that large open spaces
can offer the urban state.

Simultaneously in this future
the Green Heart appears as an island
bounded partly by water filled polders
partly by drier ones by peat polders
and clay polders and mixtures thereof
modelled mostly
after the Naardemeer bosoms
all left to develop
or helped to develop
succession ecologies
becoming in fact
a Bio-Diversity Ring
conceived to express
the full range of ecological possibility
in lowland Holland.

And by so doing
the Green Heart gains clear definition
both on the ground
and on the map
surrounded
by
this Bio-Diversity Ring
one to two kilometers wide
about one hundred and forty kilometers

in circumference
a never before conceived
eco-cultural amenity
that acts also as an air purifying system
and as a water purifying system
and as a water retaining system.
A Bio-Diversity Ring
that acts as transition
between the increasingly urban Randstad
and a clearly defined Green Heart.

A Bio-Diversity Ring
that acts as a vast bio-indicator
for the environmental health
of both the Green Heart
and the Randstad.

Simultaneously
in this new understanding
the Green Heart clarifies itself
as a village-dike-sloot lifestyle
pleasing to many
endangered by growth.
The Green Heart clarifies itself
as a many thousand hectare farm
reflecting the history of Holland

On Good Government where the Green Heart and the Randstad are defined in relation to each other

a farm
endangered by population pressures
and by economic pressures
in need of valuing and protecting.
The Green Heart clarifies itself
as an open space centering the Randstad
and defining it
as the Randstad defines the Green Heart.

The image completes itself
as alternating figure and field
a unique eco-cultural feature
landmarking the Randstad
and the Green Heart
as a global city
with a singular topology.

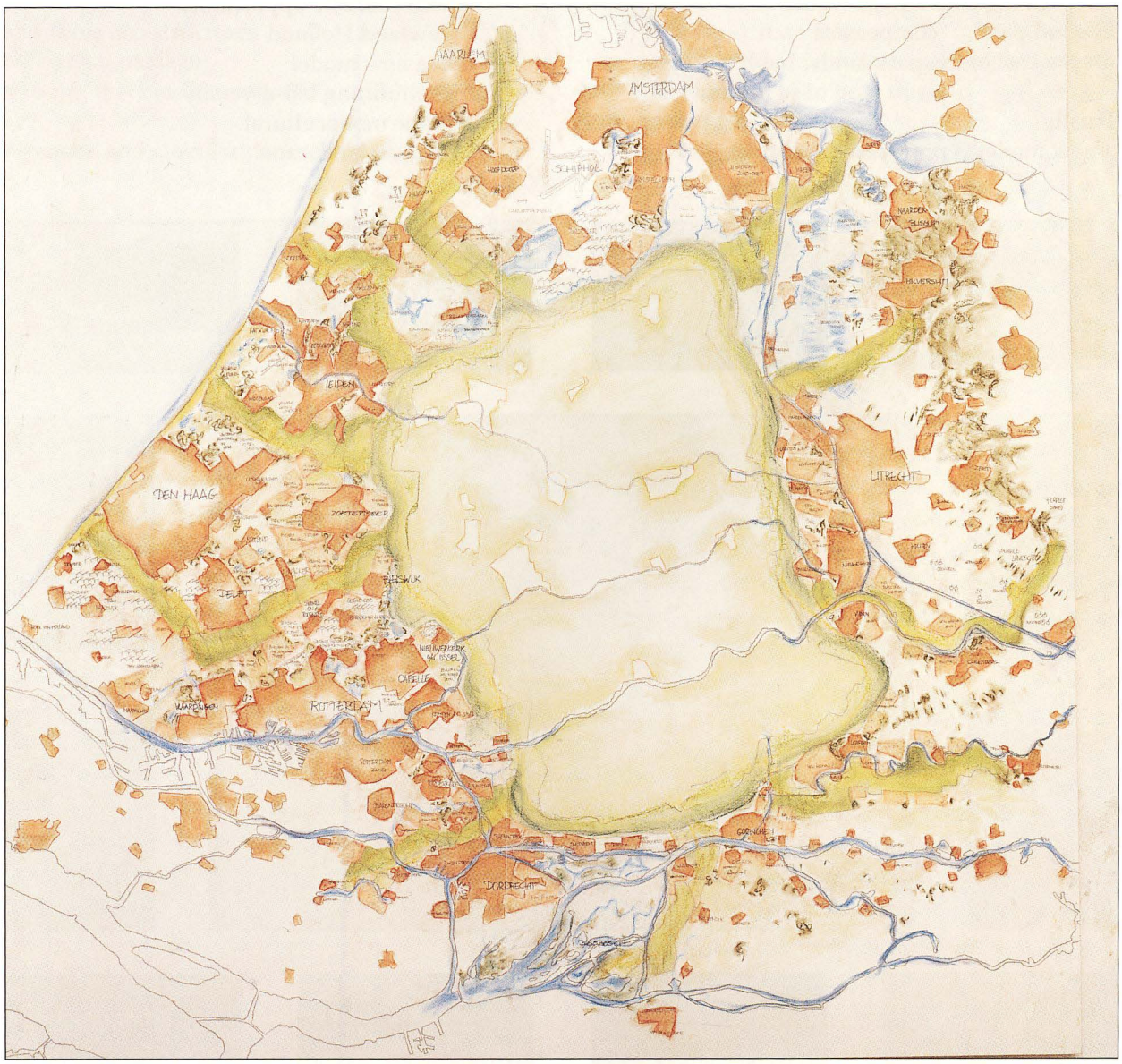
Finally
in this new vision
a single form is proposed
that
engages directly the land form of Holland
protecting and enhancing
cultural diversity
while permitting
an increase in biodiversity.
Defining and protecting the Green Heart
acting in part
as an air purification system
as it protects and defines
the cities which surround it.
Taking housing pressure from
the Green Heart
by locating at its exterior boundary
space
for hopefully less than
the 1,500,000 people
presently planned for
and thereafter
defining limits to population growth.
Respecting the Green Heart
as both a many thousand hectare farm
and
as open space
with small towns and villages
and isolated housing
along dikes and canals
that center the Randstad.
Accounting for
and folding into itself
bio-diversity
in a self-sustaining shape
which both defines the Green Heart
and acts
as an eco-cultural transition zone
between an increasingly urbanized
cultural landscape
and a historic still living
agricultural landscape
that
in the long term will pay for itself
and that oddly enough
appears like a great sun sign
emerging from the terrain of Holland.

It can happen
that a fortunate reversal will occur
where
a system can come to a consensus
that limitation is survival
and
with its future
now seen as different from its past
can construct new visions
which
will reframe the present crisis
for the advantage of many
and the disadvantage of few.

On Infrastructure and Power

The Movement of Peoples and Monies

It happens.
People migrate in large numbers
to a perceived source
of economic opportunity
disrupting established systems
and generating massive change.
And this is happening
in a twenty-year moment
in the Randstad
with Rotterdam acting as the economic magnet.
Since it is predicted that
a million and a half or more people
will come to the Randstad
in lowland Holland
in the next decades
and at least 600,000 houses
will need to be built
including appropriate infrastructure
automatically creating
a vastly stimulated marketplace



Where it can be seen that space enough exists in the Randstad for 1,500,000 people and more without building in the Green Heart

that will take the greatest fiscal advantage
available to itself
and the outcome
unless intelligently directed
will be unfortunate in the extreme.

For instance
if
the 600,000 houses that are required
for one and a half million people
are constructed
at a modest cost
of 200,000 guilders each
then
120 billion guilders will be spent
for housing alone.
Therefore
the stakes are high
and desire is strong.

If
for instance
a great Green Heart city is built
the monies will flow

Where the Eco-Urban Edge is valued

to relatively few of the largest
construction firms
architectural groups
road builders and developers.
Then
the outcome will be
a vast new infrastructure
constructed at great expense
and a new city directly competitive
with the cities in the Randstad
with well over 120 billion guilders
focused in one place
to the disadvantage of many
and to the advantage of few.

For instance
if
as happens often
a depression comes
or monies otherwise become unavailable
or populations do not move as predicted
then
great losses can be incurred
as infrastructure plans cannot be finished
and buildings remain empty or unfinished.

Above all
the value of the Green Heart is subtracted
from the future of Holland.
And this outcome
is neither necessary
nor inevitable
nor valuable culturally or socially.

However
a much less costly
less economically dangerous
more environmentally friendly
far more economically democratic
far more sociable
far less autocratic outcome
is available immediately
and
without great infrastructural expense
by re-directing the economic development
away from the Green Heart
and into the open spaces
between the Randstad cities.

For instance
by developing the open areas
in the Randstad itself
as defined by the Bio-Diversity Ring
and the Outreach Arms
an equal amount of money
can be dispersed
far more democratically
in the Great Randstad Circle
than by focusing development
in the Green Heart.
The infrastructure existing
can be extended as needed
and a vast new infrastructure
need not be overbuilt
in the historic green center lands.

Then
if people move in waves
infrastructure can be expanded
rapidly or slowly as needed.
If
the population does not come
in the numbers predicted
then
the leading edge of housing
and infrastructure
and the Green Heart
can be preserved
choices left for future generations
the environment conserved
the waters and the air
minimally stressed.

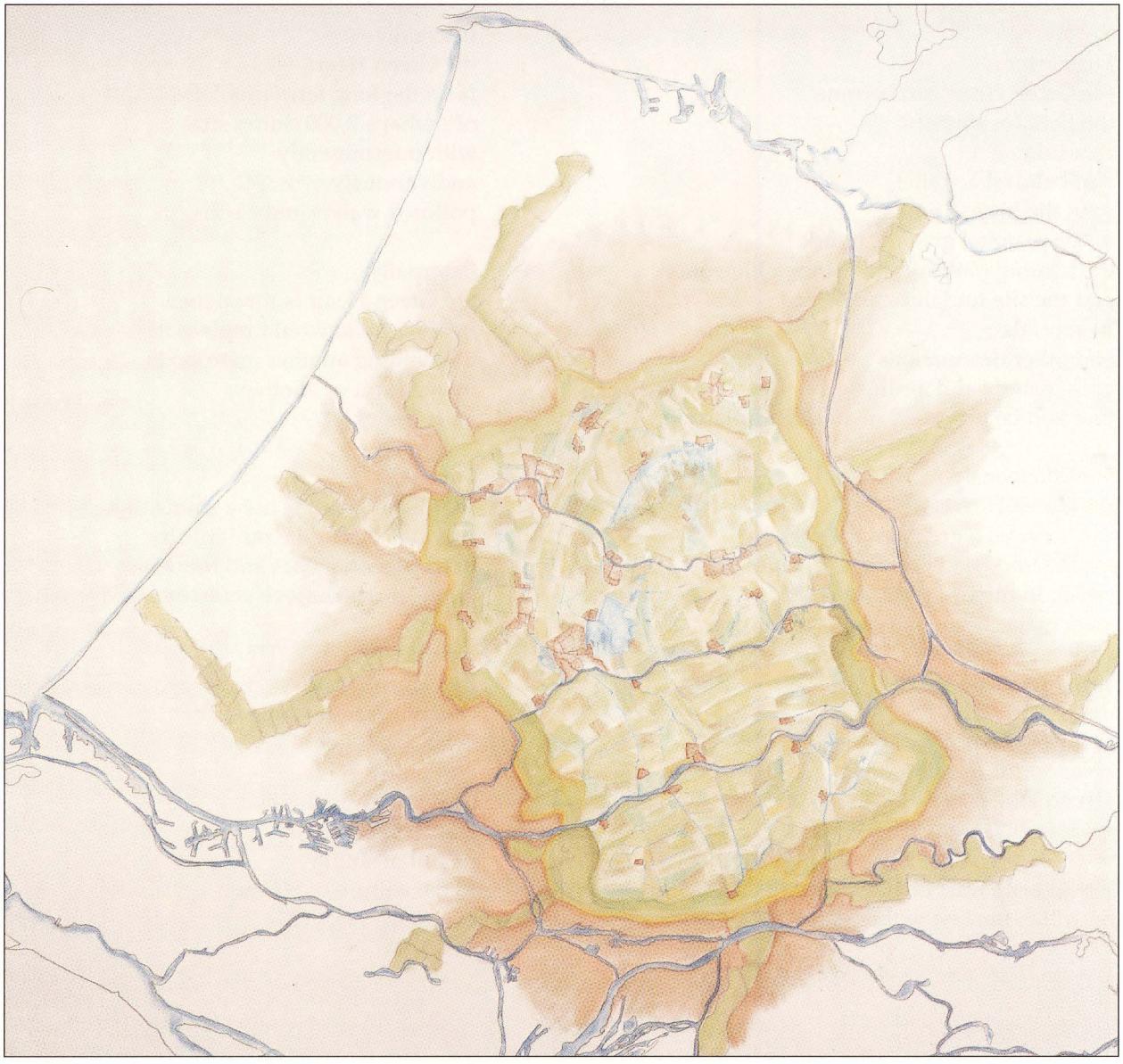
And this outcome
advantageous to the many
points to a sustainable future
for both the Green Heart and the Randstad
for growth can be slowed.
If depression or recession
comes into being
the leading edge
of infrastructure
can be slowed as well.
All of this can be done
in an orderly way
that does not leave overdevelopment
and great financial loss
in its wake.
Therefore
this outcome
fortunate in the extreme
and looks to
the greatest good
for the greatest number.

On the Green Heart

The Green Heart of Holland
has existed
since first named
in the 1930's
as an area
well-defined only
in the minds of some planners
and some governmental officials
and many residents.

For others
it is only a myth.
For still others
it has no meaning at all.

However
if the Bio-Diversity Ring is accepted
as marking its exterior border
then
the Green Heart
while remaining



Where the Green Heart is seen as itself

a many thousand hectare farm
becomes the site
of a unique bio-diverse form
as well as remaining the site
of a dike-road-sloot linear community
totally special to Holland.

This unique life-style
as beautifully exemplified
by the road along the Meije
needs to be protected
and this road can become a model
for mixed use in these linear communities
while not interfering with
the main land use.

Furthermore
the Green Heart can become
the field for touristic
recreational
and cultural activities
with the bicycle paths
of the planned green network
the boating paths of the planned blue one
and the site for landmarks
memorials
and other destinations
both historic and aesthetic
that will be proposed in an artist's plan

Simultaneously
the Green Heart
can serve as a great central park
for the Randstad ensemble of cities
which in turn
are a major economic center in Europe
without damaging
either its lifestyle,
particularly if
financial support
is found for the cities that
can no longer grow
or its farms.

The Green Heart is the landmark
by which the rest of the world
recognizes Holland.
It is the image
of the countryside of Holland
that most foreigners hold.
And
all great cities
have such topological landmarks
by which they are recognized.

Internally
The Green Heart faces the pressures
of overpopulation
and overdevelopment
whereby its identity may be lost.

Internally
the Green Heart
faces the long term problems
of perhaps 2,000 dump sites
with intermittently
and variously
polluted waters and earths.

Externally
the Green Heart is threatened
by those who would replace it
by building another metropolis
in one form or another
at its center.

Finally
the Green Heart is not a single thing.
Its value lies in the multiplicity
of its potential uses and functions
many of which have yet to be discovered.

Finally
the Green Heart
cannot continue to be itself
until
and unless
its borders are defined
and
its full meaning
to the culture of Holland
clarified.

Consulted persons

Terlouw R., ecoloog, Stichting het Zuidhollandsche Landschap
Koop Dr. Ir. H.G.J.M., bosecoloog, Instituut voor Bos-en Natuuronderzoek
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Cuadra Dr. Ing. M., architect
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Kempenaar S., agrariër
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Steenbergen Ir. G., Dienst Ruimte en Groen, Provincie Zuid-Holland
Veen Ir. A. van, Dienst Water en Milieu, Provincie Zuid-Holland
Bolten J., directeur, Stedelijk Museum De Lakenhal
Faassen Ir. H., consulentschap Bos en Landschapsinrichting, Ministerie LNV
Gorisman G., ANWB, afdeling Recreatie
Claringbould M., Raad voor Natuurbeheer
Wolff J. Ph., landschapsarchitect, San Fransisco
Kortekaas L., journalist
Halleen G., hoofd Bureau Cultuur, Provincie Zuid-Holland
Krudop R., Stichting Kunst en Cultuur Overijssel
Keessen w., planoloog
Vulkanic J., stedebouwkundige
Schrijvers T.
Hek M. van
Hendriks, Ministerie OCW

Lectures:
TU-Delft, in de "Green Metropolis" cyclus
LU Wageningen vakgroep Ruimtelijke planvorming
Het Genootschap voor Natuurontwikkeling
Het Centrum Beeldende Kunst, Leiden
Academie voor Beeldende Kunsten Rotterdam, Hogeschool Rotterdam en Omstreken.

Performances:
het bestuur ISMH, de Stuurgroep het Groene Hart, projectleiders van de elf strategische projecten, leden van het bestuur Kamer van Koophandel, Gouda, boeren, burgemeesters, studenten kunst, landschaparchitectuur en architektuur.

Press review Green Heart (Harrisons)

24 juni	1994	Goudsche Courant
01 september	1994	Rijn en Gouwe
02 september	1994	Rijn en Gouwe
15 september	1994	Goudsche Courant
09 november	1994	Rijn en Gouwe
19 november	1994	Rijn en Gouwe
22 december	1994	Rijn en Gouwe
23 december	1994	Rijn en Gouwe
04 januari	1995	Rijn en Gouwe
15 januari	1995	Rijn en Gouwe
19 januari	1995	Rijn en Gouwe
28 januari	1995	Rijn en Gouwe
03 februari	1995	Rotterdams Dagblad
03 februari	1995	Leidsch Dagblad
07 februari	1995	Haarlems Dagblad
11 februari	1995	Goudsche Courant
20 februari	1995	Rijn en Gouwe
23 februari	1995	Holland Silhouet
24 februari	1995	Nederlands Dagblad
24 februari	1995	Trouw
24 februari	1995	Reformatorisch Dagblad
04 maart	1995	Haagsche Courant
04 maart	1995	Financieel Dagblad
10 maart	1995	Rijn en Gouwe
14 maart	1995	Delftsche Courant
april	1995	Cultuurhistorisch Toerisme
16 juni	1995	Rijn en Gouwe
juni	1995	Blauwe Kamer
30 juni	1995	Haagsche Courant
juli	1995	Tentoonstellingsnieuws CBK Leiden
21 augustus	1995	Streekblad Zoetermeer
30 augustus	1995	Streekblad Zoetermeer

Television Green Heart (Harrisons)

18 november	1994	Van Gewest tot Gewest (10 minuten)
03 maart	1995	Van Gewest tot Gewest (10 minuten)
03 maart	1995	RTL-nieuws (4 minuten)

Radio Green heart (Harrisons)

Veronica Nieuwsradio
Radio West
Radio Rijnmond